MONTEREY NEWS

May 2003
VOLUME XXXIII · Number 5

The Town

On the first Saturday in May, as we do every year, Monterey will hold town meeting. We meet to fund town business and to elect from among us representatives to town government. Although some issues of concern in town are not represented in the warrant, town meeting is an essential part of our process and all are urged to attend. It begins at 9:30 a.m. Polls are open until 6:30 p.m.

Michael Storch

The Easter Bunny returned to Monterey on Easter Sunday afternoon to help out with the Coffee Club's Easter Egg Hunt

Chief Ray Tryon informed the Select Board on April 7 that town meeting childcare is prohibited in the Monterey Firehouse due to the house rules set by vote of the membership. Children will be entertained in the pavilion by Marta Makuc and YMCA staff. Marta can be reached at 528-YMCA.

On Board

The Coffee Club hosted the Select Board on April 14. Members of the group wanted more information about the plan to hire an additional police officer with a federal grant. The consensus was that townspeople should have a chance to discuss it at a town meeting, and to that end a petition to place a question on the warrant was presented. The cutoff date for placing articles on the warrant has passed and the question will have to be scheduled for a special town meeting.

Corned Beef and Cabbage

Over one hundred townspeople attended the New England Dinner at the Meetinghouse on Friday, April 25. All the proceeds from the dinner went to the New Marlborough Central School Playground Fund as the food was donated by the Coffee Club. The food and the service were first rate. Afterward about forty people moved up to the Firehouse for a review of warrant articles.

Information Please

The Finance Committee was in charge of the informational meeting to discuss the warrant articles for the May 3rd town meeting and proceeded with a line by line review. Most items did not generate questions, but those that did produced some interesting discussions. Some of the highlights are noted below.

Warrant Articles: Notes and Quotes

Article 1 lists the positions needing to be filled on various boards. Article 2 concerns the Town Reports and Article 3 fixes the salaries for elected positions.

Article 4 is the budget request for Fiscal Year 2004. The General Government request includes 3 percent wage increases for full time town employees as well as some part-time employees. This is a cost of living increase. The General Government budget request for Fiscal year 2004 was lowered, mostly by a reduced contribution to the town's Reserve Fund. Overlay Surplus Funds, which are the monies left over from several years of tax overlay funds, as specified in Article 13, will make up the difference.

Discussion of the Protection, Persons and Property section of the budget request turned to an item not in the warrant, the hiring of a second full-time police officer. Stan Ross, stepping away from his role on the Finance Committee, urged the Select Board to "waive the privilege of making this decision and let the people have their say." Chief Backhaus outlined his reasons for going after the grant, noting that Monterey was the only town in the State to get it. A spirited discussion followed which highlighted the need for more detailed information by some present and the probability of further discussion in the future. (See related story on p. 4.)

The Plumbing Inspector will take over the duties and funds of the Gas Inspector, formerly the job of the Fire Inspector. The State requires Gas Inspectors be licensed. Both inspectors will be probably be paid per inspection, rather than by salary as has been the custom. The final figures have not been determined.

In the Education section, Chapter 70 money is uncertain and may vanish altogether, in which case the schools will have to revise their projections. Because Chapter 70 is a pass-through from the state it actually doesn't affect the budget. Monterey's assessment for Schools Capital expenses, an increase of almost $4,000 reflects our higher property valuations. The Schools Operating budget request is up by almost $15,000 over last year, to $644,065.

In the Public Works and Facilities section, there was some confusion over how much of the Highway and Winter Maintenance budgets are attributable to salaries. Three percent salary increases are reflected in both items. Muriel Lazzarini said that about $90,000 of Highway Maintenance is for wages, but she is uncertain of the figure in Winter Maintenance. She went on to say that due to the harsh winter the budget request on line 423, Winter Maintenance, would have to go to $160,000 instead of the $131,640 shown on the warrant, as we are required to budget based on the previous year's expenditure. In the event of a mild winter, unspent funds would go to Free Cash.

People wanted to know more about the expenses of the Highway Department. Peter Brown stated that the "trend is for streamlining" and providing less detail in the warrant as "we waste time over unimportant stuff." The total request for the Highway budget is $472,408.

The $14,000 increase in costs for the Transfer Station brought assurances from the board that a plan is in the works. This may involve a $100 sticker fee and/or some form of pay per throw.

Article 7 is a request for $7,000 for repairs to Bally Gally, the rental house on the Edith Wilson property. Some funds remain in the Wilson House Account, but the additional funds will pay for removal of black mold and ventilation to prevent a recurrence. Replacement of windows will improve ventilation and eliminate the lead paint problem. Income generated by the rental ($8,400 this year) goes to the General Fund.

In Article 12 is a request to raise $150,000 to add to Stabilization, $60,000 of which will resurface in Article 15 to be passed on to reduce the tax levy for the coming year. Our tax rate would be about 20 cents higher without this action.

Quarterly property tax payments, which have been seen as a way of reducing borrowing and interest payments (Item 752 on the Warrant is $9,000), is the subject of Article 17. Mari Makuc Enoch came prepared with what costs would be incurred by this change. It is estimated that onetime costs involving software upgrades and such would be about $4,000, with yearly additional costs of $1,150. It costs $400 for each mailing. Currently the Tax Collector processes 4800 tax bills of all kinds annually. The change would bring the number to 8300. An increase in the workload might require an increase in the salary for that position. Benefits of easing cash flow problems and interest payments need to be weighed against increased expense. Some expressed the feeling that better budgeting might be the answer, but all agreed that at the very least tax bills need to go out on time.

Article 18 defines and prohibits personal watercraft. Unlike the previous

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attempts to pass this bylaw, the current version has been reviewed by state officials and is deemed acceptable. Article 19 which "resolves to retain the Town Beach in its present location" engendered no discussion.

Chris Blair, Chair of the Conservation Commission, made a presentation on the Scenic Mountain Act, Article 20. A yes vote would authorize the Conservation Commission to draft maps and regulations for high visibility areas. The act does not prevent or prohibit building but provides a way for the town to encourage and preserve scenic values and protect steep slopes, those 15 percent or greater. After two and a half years of work and three public meetings, Mr. Blair stated that work on preliminary regulations is underway. If the act passes, regulations and maps must still be reviewed by the town. Mr. Blair was able to reassure many that the regulations would not add undue burdens but would in fact increase property values in general. Jon Sylbert pointed out that the quality of life we enjoy as a town is due in no small part to regulations we've already enacted.

In Article 22, the Select Board is recommending the expansion of the Park Commission from three members to five, citing the need to spread the demands of the job among a larger group.

Articles 23 through 26 are standard each year and enable the town to borrow funds or appoint members of boards.

The meeting closed at 9:30.

Public Access

The work of the Public Access Committee will soon be complete. Their mandate from the Select Board was to find other locations that might satisfy the need for public access to Lake Garfield by boats. Title searches on the whole area need to be done before any coherent plan can emerge. An article on the town meeting warrant is intended to determine the wishes of the town in regard to the Town Beach.

Resolving Town Hall Issues

As with any building project, the Town Hall expansion plans are still being fine-tuned. Most recently, more detailed environmental requirements are being adapted to. It may be necessary to relocate the basketball court to provide the required amount of wetlands reclamation, and offices may be relocated. In any case, it won't be long before construction begins.

Sunday, May 4, is Monterey Cleanup Day. Call Sue Protheroe for more information at 528-4450

See you at Town Meeting!!!

— Michele Miller

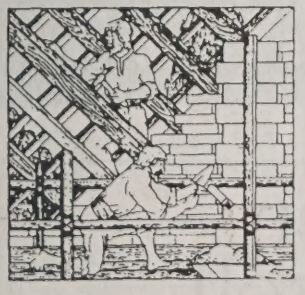
Wayne Burkhart Candidate for Planning Board

Wayne Burkhart, Republican nominee for the Planning Board in the May 3rd town election, has provided the following statement about his candidacy. It was not received in time to run with the other candidates' statements in the April issue. A statement from Democratic nominee Joyce Scheffey appeared in that issue.

I'm the senior member on the Planning Board, and served as chair for about ten years. During that time through seminars, reading and writing bylaws and by working cooperatively with the Board of Appeals and other town boards I have learned valuable skills and information about the place of the Planning Board in town governance.

My goals for the board and for the Town of Monterey are summed up in the words "fairness" and "consistency." I want us to be ready for new challenges, but not to act too hastily against perceived threats.

I want the board to help the Town of Monterey to maintain and improve living and working opportunities for its citizens. Three important and continuing goals: to promote modest housing for those who need it; to maintain rural and open characteristics and resources; to promote satisfactory small businesses and jobs for everyone.



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Monterey Receives COPS Grant for Additional Police

I am pleased to announce that the Town of Monterey has received a federal COPS Universal Hiring Grant for $75,000, which the Monterey Selectboard has accepted. The Monterey Police Department was the only department in Massachusetts to receive this grant, this year. The grant is to hire an additional full-time police officer for the Town of Monterey.

The grant is for four years. It will provide $27,500 the first year, $25,000 the second year, and $22,500 the third year. The town is then required to retain the employee and fund the full expenses for at least the fourth year. A Community Policing Grant was also received for $10,000, which will cover any other expenses incurred during the first year.

Before deciding to apply for the grant and hire a full-time officer, all possible scenarios utilizing part-time officers were considered. The biggest problems we were confronted with in using part-time officers were turnover and scheduling. The issue was not a matter of money, but a matter of commitment. Part-time officers have full-time jobs and usually work in more then one department. They also only like to work one day on the weekends and usually have plans on major holidays. Lots of time, effort, and money are put into training part-time officers. In the last ten years over a dozen officers have come and gone. Each time an officer leaves, critical gaps in patrol coverage are left to fill with on-call time.

Hiring a full-time police officer will help us solve this problem. It also will give the town a better trained and qualified professional. A full-time officer will be more committed to the town and will have more reasons to stay. This will allow for a stronger bond with the community, which will help to improve communication and prevent crime. It will also allow for better preparedness for major emergencies. It will increase our coverage of the town by providing for more police presence, which is a proven crime deterrent.

Over the last six years crime—especially drug-related—has increased in South County. Such activity tends to take the path of least resistance. Our Police Department needs to remain comparable—relatively speaking—to neighboring towns such as Sheffield, Great Barrington, Lee, and Egremont in order to keep Monterey safe. This grant will enable us to do that. Now is a good time to prepare for our future and have a stronger, better trained Police Department, which will help to secure the quality of life we all enjoy today.

As always, I appreciate the support of the community and encourage everyone to come to the annual town meeting to support the police department, so we can be there for you.

— Gareth Backhaus,
Chief, Monterey Police

Daffodil Thank-Yous

Thanks to all the workers, and to all who called in orders to support the Cancer Drive in Monterey. We missed the store for distributing them last year and so are glad to be back in the swing again. I hope you all enjoy your early daffodils, especially as spring seems pretty far off at this snowy moment.

Appreciation goes to: Bonnie at the Monterey General Store for handling the storing and distributing; Cynthia Webber for distributing to the elderly, and the "Coffee Club" for donating funds for same, and to workers: Denise Andrus, Shelly Bynack, Leona Chamberlin, Ruth Champigny, Barbara Dahlman, Ann Dinan, Carol Edleman, Amy Goldfarb, Stephanie Grotz, Maureen Hough, Pat Mielke, Michele Miller. We netted around $1775 to benefit the Cancer Drive. So many of us have direct connections to someone suffering from cancer, that it makes an easy way to give to a fund dear to our hearts AND enjoy the cheery early flowers. I started in 1985 when we collected $174 and daffodils were $3.00 a bunch, and with a dozen helpers we reached a top sale in 2001 of $1816 when the price had gone up to $6.00. Not bad for little Monterey. Last year didn't work with the General Store closed. Next year we'll go for $2000.

Thank you one and all—you are appreciated. Look for us next year.

— Fran Amidon & Pat Mielke,
Coordinators

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Two holidays are deeply intertwined in the month of May, Mother's Day and Memorial Day. They are especially poignant this year because we have more dead sons, daughters, brothers, and sisters from wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Death in war occurs at random, and this very randomness torments those of us who were spared. Every veteran I ever met wished war would never happen again, and yet it does.

I began my life as a veteran on February 27, 1968. Every day since I have thought about my war experience in Vietnam. On that first day back, I glided through LA airport in deep culture shock. I was a young Marine not old enough to vote, and was denied a beer at the airport lounge. But I had one thing not every returning veteran had, a loving, nurturing family waiting for me. My parents were much younger at that time than I am today. I can see looking back what suffering my mother experienced waiting anxiously while watching helplessly as the body count mounted. She had waited out my father's tour in World War II with the Navy in the Pacific while she cared for my older brother at home. After my war tour of thirteen months, my older brother served fourteen months. As a parent today with young adult children, I can only imagine the dread she felt.

In 1872, that very same dread that mothers have felt for all the history of humankind was what inspired Julia Ward Howe to propose Mother's Day as a day dedicated to peace. She was well known as the writer of the words to the "Battle Hymn of the Republic." As she pondered the barbarism and unnecessary character of war she thought, "Why do not the mothers of mankind interfere in these matters, to prevent the waste of that human life of which they alone bear and the know the cost?"

She wrote a stirring document calling for mothers to unite to end war. "Let them meet first," she said, "as women, to bewail and commemorate the dead." The preamble to her call could still be cried today:

"Again, in the sight of the Christian world, have the skill and power of two great nations exhausted themselves in mutual murder. Again have the sacred questions of international justice been committed to the fatal mediation of military weapons. In this day of progress, in this century of light, the ambition of rulers has been allowed to barter the dear interests of domestic life for the bloody exchanges of the battle-field. Thus men have done. Thus men will do. But women need no longer be made a party to proceedings which fill the globe with grief and horror. Despite the assumptions of physical force, the mother has a sacred and commanding word to say to the sons who owe their life to her suffering. That word should now be heard, and answered to as never before."

After I came home, my mother confessed to me that she had been writing letters to President Johnson begging him to end the war, but she didn't want me to know. That act, trying to end the carnage of war, truly was a way of "supporting the troops."

So during these two important holidays let us all honor the selfless sacrifice and pain of mothers and their lost children. Let us never give up hope of a world where dialog and life are deemed more precious than succumbing to fear and the creation of more war.

We miss you, brothers and sisters. We think of you as we enjoy the many blessings and comforts of living in the United States. We honor your service and will never forget you.

— Steve Pullen

Please attend the memorial service at Monterey Veterans Memorial Park at 11 a.m. this Memorial Day.

Memorial Day, May 26 Monterey Events

11:00 a.m.: A remberance service for veterans and members of our armed forces will be held at the Veterans Memorial Park, corner of Blue Hill Road and Route 23.

1:00 p.m.: Annual Memorial Day Parade. The route will be from Sandisfield Road to the center of town at the post office and then proceed to the pavillion at the rear of the firehouse for free hot dogs, tonic and activities for all.

— Dean Amidon,
Veterans Memorial Park Comm.

Snow Farm opens May 1st

Discover Snow Farm's greenhouse, garden center, farmstore, and working farm and experience the best of the Berkshire Countryside!

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Strife with Loosestrife

Local wetlands have long nurtured the biological diversity of our environment, contributing much to the appeal and beauty of our region. Historically, one used to be able to find a variety of native plants on display around the banks of Lake Garfield and Brewer's Pond. Bonner J. McAllester, one of our residents, has done a great service to the community by preserving and documenting many of these species in a handsome nature trail around Brewer's Pond. The multiplicity of flora along the shores of a body of water ensures a healthy ecosystem and supports the habitat of local animals and birds. There, between water and land, these populations may safely forage, breed and endure. Over time, because of changing environmental conditions advantageous to its proliferation, the cattail, an opportunistic native, has become a monoculture, taking over large areas along the peripheries of these waters. The runaway propagation of such plants alters the balance of our ecosystem; those idyllic landscapes from the past are fast disappearing.

To make matters worse, in recent years a voracious, nonnative, purple-flowered plant has laid siege to much of the land along the water's edge. Sometimes it snuggles up to the cattails, sometimes it pushes them aside and takes over on its own. This marauder, with its deceptively attractive blossoms, has proliferated in volume year by year, becoming a monoculture in itself, and placing the shoreline and wetlands, as we know them, in grave danger.

This purple plant, *Lithrum salicaria*, common name "purple loosestrife," poses an imminent threat to the shorelines along the pond and the smaller, westerly bowl of Lake Garfield. It is extremely adaptable and quickly takes over, pushing out competitors for nutrients.

According The US Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service, "[The plant] responds to soil nutrient deficiencies, by increasing the root-to-shoot ratio; to rising water levels, by specialized structures in submerged root tissue; and to trampling, cutting or crushing of stems, with shoot and root buds at the site of damage. Its seeds number over two million to each plant, and germination is about 80%."

Lithrum salicaria originated in Eurasia and has no natural enemies in our hemisphere. Little wonder it is taking over! Any place you see cattails, sedges, or similar grasses growing in the sun, expect to find a loosestrife infestation in the near future. To put it more picturesquely, we are being invaded by an army of Godzillas wearing purple-flowered hats!

Is there any chance of us poor humans prevailing in this war? There's good news and bad news. The bad news: Current research indicates total eradication is not possible. Our best, in fact, our *only*, weapon is control. The good news: In the brochure, "Purple Loosestrife—What You Should Know and What You Can Do," The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters outlines effective methods for control and includes a chart with options for removing the plant. Below are some of their recommendations:

1. For a site with isolated plants in low density (1 percent to 25 percent of the area), they recommend eradication by digging and hand pulling.

2. When the infestation is of medium or large density, digging is not effective. In that case, the preferred method is to cut the flowering spikes, while keeping the flower-heads wrapped in plastic.

3. For an area of up to four acres, with medium density, the recommendation is for cutting, plus biological control with plant-eating insects, or, alternatively, chemical control.

4. For areas of more than four acres with high density, biological control may be the only effective method.

The Lake Garfield Association has a small number of these brochures. They will be available for distribution at the

LGA Alerts

Summer LGA Meetings:
June 21, July 19 & August 8
9:30 a.m. – at the Firehouse
LakeFest – August 16

Visit www.lakegarfield.org for information on lake ecology and LakeFest.

Michele Miller

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upcoming Hatchery Teaching Day. A larger supply will be available in the near future. In June, at the invitation of the LGA, a Federal Fish and Wildlife scientist will evaluate our loosestrife problem and present his findings at their first meeting of the year, Saturday, June 21, 2003, at the Firehouse.

If you appreciate the gravity of this problem, here are some things that you, as an individual, can do to help:

First, get your copy of the brochure from LGA. Then, carefully look over your property, especially any marshy areas, to determine if and where the plants are growing. Enlist friends and family to help pull them out, either by hand or with a digging fork, making sure you get the entire root of each plant. (This is important; just pulling off the tops will only broadcast the seeds and stimulate root growth.) These flowering trespassers are tough to get rid of, but each successive generation left to flourish will make removing them that much more difficult. Left undisturbed, this vegetation will continue to thrive, until it finally destroys our waterways. Most important, make sure to attend the June 21st LGA meeting, where we will explore our options, as individuals and in groups.

It is important for the growth and preservation of our community that the people of Monterey join together, listen, and learn, as qualified experts address our common problems. Maybe, together, we can decapitate and eradicate those flower-hatted monsters!

— Patricia Edelstein
& Harriet S. Harvey

Green Corner Bulletin,

Spring is here! Time to tend to gardens and lawns. Before reaching for the pesticide spray or chemical fertilizer, think twice. Pesticide exposure has been linked to poisonings, learning disabilities in children, increased incidences of several kinds of cancers and reproductive and endocrine disruption. Bees, butterflies, songbirds, pets, frogs, and fish are often inadvertently harmed by pesticide use. (Herbicides are pesticides, too!) Luckily, there is a far more environmentally friendly approach. It's called IPM—Integrated Pest Management—a high tech name for a commonsense approach

Lawn and Garden Care Tips:

Choose plants wisely. Select plants that are suited to the conditions in your landscape, and varieties that are pest and disease resistant. Don't purchase plants if the roots are swirling around the walls of the container or emerging from the drainage hole. Avoid plants that flower or fruit before all the others—it may be a last ditch attempt at survival.

Get to know your soil. Why waste money on fertilizer when a simple pH adjustment is what's needed? Get a free soil test to learn about your soil. The Master Gardeners can do a free test for acidity (pH). Visit them at local farmers' markets or contact them at www.wmassmastergardeners.org or 413-298-5355 for a schedule.

Water works. One inch of water a week (morning is best), a little more for new plantings. An inexpensive rain gauge will help you know if enough rain has fallen to quench your plants' thirst.

Tolerate some insects. Many insects are benign or even beneficial, such as lady beetles.

Pesticides—the last resort. Try physical controls such as sticky traps or a blast of hose water. These techniques help keep the number of insects down. Use less toxic, non-persistent controls like horticultural oils or Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*). Look for the most problem-specific and least toxic product.

For more information or to schedule a program for your group, contact CET at 413 445-4556 or www.cetonline.org. Program support is provided by USDA Rural Utilities Service.

— Joy Kirschenbaum

Monterey Kindergarten at May 14 Community Dinner

The next Community Dinner is scheduled for Wednesday, May 14, at 6:00 p.m. in the Meetinghouse Fellowship Hall. As usual, this community event promises to abound with a wonderful assortment of fine pot-luck fare provided, of course, by all who attend. After dinner, children from the Monterey Kindergarten, under the tutelage of Susan Andersen, will recite an impressive selection of poetry memorized during the school year. Cake and ice cream will be served following the program. Everyone is invited to dinner and the show. For dinner, please contribute a generous dish of food to share and bring your own plate and silverware. If you have any questions you may contact Kathie Frome at 528-2516.

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Buy Local! —Chefs Welcome Spring

It's May. Winter's over, and the many chefs who are Berkshire Grown members have reconnected with their favorite local growers. Menus change to reflect spring flavors, native vegetables begin to replace those shipped from faraway places, and restaurant specials emphasize the onset of the local growing season. Listen to some of the local chefs talk about their spring menus.

"After our long winters, we eagerly await the local produce," says chef Clayton Hambrick of Church Street Cafe in Lenox. "I use anything I can get my hands on when the fresh produce starts coming out. I'll change our specials weekly, and even daily if supplies are limited."

Dan Smith, chef-owner of John Andrew's in South Egremont, encapsulates the sensuous excitement of spring's onset in the Berkshires. "My imagination goes into overdrive in the spring. It's always a new beginning, always a new light in the kitchen to start using local produce again."

Many restaurants change their menus each season, in part to reflect local produce. The spring menu at Old Inn on the Green in New Marlborough was initiated in April and runs through June. Chef Peter Platt reports, "We started serving microgreens grown by Ted Dobson at Equinox Farm in Sheffield in late March, and we'll be getting spinach and arugula this year from Lisa Petricca of River Valley Farm in Lenox."

Local asparagus, strawberries, rhubarb, ramps, and peas will play a culinary role in May and June. Douglas Luf, Executive Chef of the Red Lion Inn in Stockbridge and Jack's Grill in Housatonic, is a fan of dandelion greens in the spring. "I like the dandelions picked young. I put them in some type of vinaigrette, with steak or with pasta. They're great when they're raw, but I don't like them cooked."

Although Martin Lewis, chef-owner of the fourteen-year old Martin's Restaurant in Great Barrington, does not change his menu for each season, he does buy fresh produce when it's available. "A lot of the time I put the names of the farm on the menu, like Taft Farm asparagus, and Monterey chevre. I like to recognize the local farmers. My wait staff is very informed on that, and they push the local angle."

Some restaurant patrons argue that menu descriptions are overlong when they specify the ingredients' origin, yet a number of chefs stress the importance of telling people where the food was grown. "The more we indicate where the food comes from, the clearer it is that the food is fresh," says Platt. "We use chicken from Taft Farm and Stone Church, and we say so. But you can't list three different ingredients for one dish. It just gets silly."

Dan Smith, too, likes to name his food sources, but cautions, "It can get into overkill when it sounds too much like a culinary road map."

Michael Ballon, chef-owner of Castle Street Cafe in Great Barrington, opened his restaurant in 1989 featuring a salad with locally grown mesclun and locally made goat cheese. "Ted Dobson is the original guru of mesclun in the Berkshires. There's money in growing greens, and Ted's responsible for that," says Ballon. Yet he laments, "I can't buy local stuff a good part of the year. I get great dairy and bread products all year round, but even though there's a huge interest in locally raised meat, there just isn't enough grown here to satisfy restaurant demand."

Chefs Platt and Luf are both active members of the B2B (Business to Business), a committee of food buyers and farmers within Berkshire Grown. As Platt says, "Being a member of Berkshire Grown is a definite benefit for chefs. We get a directory of local suppliers, so when we need something, we look at the list of farmers, which tells us what they grow and when it's ready. If you take just a little extra time to look in the directory during the season, you increase your opportunity to buy locally. And this encourages farmers to grow more, which is what we need in the long run."

Lisa Petricca, a Lenox farmer who's expanding her business, explains how Berkshire Grown links growers and chefs. "I met Douglas Luf at a Berkshire Grown meeting last year, and started selling him arugula and sorrel. We developed a terrific relationship, and now I look forward to doing the same with other chefs. I've learned that it's easy to please chefs. Just bring them what they want. If you're striving to grow something really good, and you harvest it, and you bring it to them, they'll be very happy. And I've found that Berkshire chefs are very loyal customers."

Staff training is an important part of Luf's approach to serving local food. "I show my kitchen staff the product when it comes in. We talk about how we're going to deal with it, what we'll make with it. Educating the dining room staff is also important. I have them taste store

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bought versus field grown. I pass along any information about the farm," he explains.

Caroline Corbin, a New Marlborough resident and a Dining Room Supervisor at the Red Lion Inn, appreciates Luf's method of staff training. She reports, "There's something really charming about getting together in the back of the dining room, and having Douglas bring out, say, a fresh, locally grown sorrel salad with farmer's cheese. We see how it looks on the plate, and taste it so we can inform the customers. It's fun for us, and helps us keep our customers well informed."

Megan Moore, a caterer headquartered in Great Barrington, thinks it's important for farmers to recognize the difference between restaurant chefs and caterers. "My needs are quite different from a restaurant. I might need ten cases of salad greens on one day for one job, but not on a regular basis. I'm more of an irregular customer, although if something really fabulous comes in, I want the farmers to call me so I can add it to my menu. I have a lot of flexibility with my clients that way."

Moore and Scott Cole, chef-owner of Caffe Pomo d'Oro in West Stockbridge, attended a grower-buyer meeting during the winter off-season. Cole reports, "Megan and I met with Lisa Petricca, Jen Tessler, and Pete Salinetti from Woven Roots in Lee, Amy Goldfarb from Gould Farm in Monterey, and Glenn Collins from High Lawn. We discussed product availability and delivery schedules, and got to know one another, which will benefit all of us through the season. And we had fun. You know, that counts for something, too."

While many restaurants are returning to local products in May, Jack's Grill in Housatonic is initiating a much more local menu than in past years. Chef Luf says, "I'll have a little chalkboard that tells guests what's local. And all the chicken will be from Taft Farm, just down the road from Jack's."

Peter Platt, an experienced member of the "buy local" community, sums it up, "If you think about it, it's very easy to buy locally. I've been involved for some years now, and I can see the progress we've made. Local food speaks for itself. It tastes so much better that you don't have to explain why it's important to support local agriculture."

— Laurily Epstein

The Sap Season Has Not Yet Ended

As of April 15 we at Gould Farm who do maple syruping have continued to collect and boil sap, both from our 750 taps (buckets) and 1800 taps (tubing). The season began later than usual and may have seemed over before it hardly began; but yet that pent-up sap lay deep beneath the snow cover within the maple roots, awaiting the downward thaw. And so it came, the thaw and mud season, and with it the upward flowing sap, dripping frantically well into April, topping off many of our buckets to overflowing before we could get to them.

The moral of this sappy story is not to pick the bucket before one has to, because the sweetest sap may be yet to come ...

— Robert Rausch

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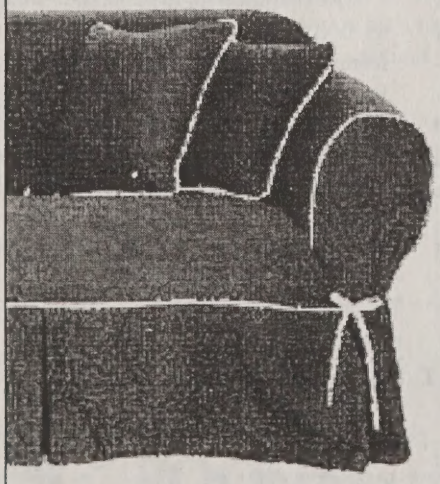

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Ag Internships for Mt. Everett Students

Farms are flourishing in Berkshire County, but Berkshire youth often have little experience with agriculture. Although historically farms have been the home and financial base of many Berkshire families, recent generations of local young people have become less involved with the local landscape.

Sheffield Land Trust, Housatonic River Restoration, and Berkshire Grown are cooperating with Mt. Everett Regional High School and local farmers to develop an agricultural component to the school's existing internship opportunities. These internship placements will be with a variety of types of farms and agriculturally oriented businesses and organizations. The internship opportunities will provide students in their junior and senior years with knowledge of various aspects of farming, the role of area farms in food and fiber production; an opportunity to study the influence of farming practices on the Housatonic watershed; and the effects of area agricultural enterprises on the local economy.

Some of the placement possibilities could include experience in orchard management, milk production, maple sugaring, or equine care. Other placements might emphasize scientific studies of various aspects of the Housatonic watershed in relation to land use and agricultural "best management" practices and testing the chemistry of soils and compost. Other placements could create opportunities to research aspects of local agricultural history and to record oral histories. In conjunction with Mt. Everett's programs in food preparation and business, some placements might give interns culinary experience with local food production and practice in marketing

The agricultural community in Berkshire County is diverse, innovative, and successful, particularly when compared with other areas of the country where family farms are few and far between and most large farms grow one or two mass-produced commodities. Berkshire County can offer opportunities to our youth in organic as well as conventional production, traditional or highly mechanized operations, and production of unusual and "gourmet" products. Our farming heritage is as old as our Native American and colonial history and as modern as the computer, as traditional as corn and squash and as unusual as llamas.

One of the goals of the internship coordinator is to develop direct links between academic subjects and the agricultural experience. Students can pursue almost any conventional subject discipline in an agricultural setting. Farmers need to know chemistry, soil science, botany and anatomy; business, marketing and advertising; natural resources management and computer programs. Historical changes in local agriculture need to be documented. Projects in the visual arts could develop drawing, photography, and video skills. Opportunities are as varied as a student's interests.

Registration for the 2003 fall semester is currently underway. For more information contact: David Pottle or Scott Farrel at Mt. Everett or Ann Hanchett at 528-0374.

A brochure about the program is also available in the Mt. Everett Guidance Office

— Ann Hanchett

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Monterey Receives Tree-planting Grant

As Arbor Day approaches, several cities and towns in western Massachusetts have been awarded grants that will assist in planting new trees. The Department of Environmental Management's Mass ReLeaf program includes grants of $4,565 to Charlemont for plantings on Main Street; $2,647 to Chesterfield for plantings on South Street; $2,402 to Lenox for plantings in the Route 7A historic district; and $2,683 to Monterey for plantings at Memorial Park and Brewer Dam Park.

Mass ReLeaf grant awards provide funds for tree purchases that communities have committed to plant and maintain. DEM awarded $123,000 to thirty-three communities for the upcoming planting seasons.

Oil Paint and Waste Motor Oil Collections for May

Residents of Monterey and the other sixteen towns that form the South Berkshire Household Hazardous Waste Collaborative may bring used motor oil and oil based paints to the locations listed below on the dates listed. Preregistration is required by calling the Center for Ecological Technology (CET) at 445-4556 or 800-238-1221 or e-mail jamiec@cetonline.org. Acceptable materials are unwanted oil paint, stains, paint thinners and turpentine as well as used motor oil.

Saturday, May 10, 9–11 a.m., Otis Transfer Station, West Center Road.

Saturday, May 17, 9–11 a.m., Lenox: Department of Public Works, 275 Main St./Route 7A.

Refer to page http://www.cetonline.org/Events/events.htm#collections for more information about acceptable material and additional collection opportunities.

Latex paint will not be collected at any of these events. Dried latex paint can be disposed of with regular trash. Kitty litter or newspaper can be used to absorb the excess liquid until it is dry.

Senator Says

State Budget Update

Many readers are undoubtedly aware that Massachusetts is experiencing significant revenue shortfalls. Several economic projections have indicated that the budget gap for Fiscal Year 2004 could be as high as $3 billion, which represents more than 10 percent of this year's $23 billion budget. Clearly difficult choices lie ahead for the Legislature. As a member of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, I am actively reviewing both the Governor's and the House's budget proposals and will continue looking for cost saving opportunities, while at the same time protecting services for our most vulnerable citizens. I appreciate the phone calls and letters I have received from constituents advocating for a range of issues. It is always helpful for me to hear residents' opinions, and I encourage you to contact your state Representative as well.

As of press time, the Senate is reviewing the House's version of the budget. After the Senate debates its budget, a conference committee—usually made up of two Senators and two Representatives from the majority party, and a Senator and a Representative from the minority party—will be assigned to negotiate any differences between the House and Senate budgets. Once those differences are resolved, the document will be sent to the Governor.

Soon, the Legislature will also be considering several proposals advanced by the Governor that would consolidate many state government resources. While I certainly support the notion of finding bureaucratic savings where they may exist, I am concerned that some populations may not be well served under the streamlining efforts.

For example, the Governor has proposed reorganizing the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) into four clusters, focusing on Elder Affairs; Children, Youth and Families; Disabilities and Community Services; and Health. While the Governor has included his EOHHS reorganization in his budget plans, he has not yet (as of press time) filed the corresponding legislation detailing his reorganization proposal. Without this legislation, it is very difficult for legislators to determine the full extent and impact of his reorganization plan on services to seniors and others impacted by the reorganization. I will carefully review his formal reorganization proposal to make sure that any reorganization efforts, if adopted by the legislature, will create efficiencies in the current system, maximize state and federal funding, and still provide necessary services to the intended constituents.

Congress Considers Stimulus Package for States

On the national level, the U.S. Senate is considering an important piece of bipartisan legislation that could provide a substantial economic stimulus to state and local governments across the country. The bill (S.201) would provide $40 billion to states to assist in critical funding areas, including childcare, education, election reform, homeland security, Medicaid, and public health. If the legislation is successful, Massachusetts would receive about $800 million.

In many instances, the federal government mandates that states meet certain requirements for programs, yet does not provide adequate funding sources. These unfunded mandates, such as the No Child Left Behind Act, place a major financial strain on states, which may not have budgeted for these programs. At a time when states are facing the worst budget crisis since World War II, federal assistance is critical to help us meet the challenges on the state and local level.

The bill before Congress, which is cosponsored by Senator John Kerry, would create two pools of funds. The first would allocate $20 billion to each state based on population, in which case Massachusetts would receive about $450 million. The second pool would allocate $20 billion to states relative to unemployment trends between 2000 and 2002. States that experienced higher increases in unemployment levels would be eligible for a greater share of the funds. The Commonwealth would receive about $350 million based on unemployment figures. I encourage interested readers to contact their federal representatives in support of the "State and Local Aid and Economic Stimulus Act of 2003."

— State Sen. Andrea F. Nuciforo, Jr.

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Claire Mielke to Receive Science Award

Claire Mielke, a senior at Mount Everett Regional School will receive the Bausch and Lomb Science Award at the graduation ceremony at Tanglewood on May 31. Mary Edwards, Science Department chair at Mount Everett, made the announcement on behalf of the department.

The Bausch and Lomb award is given annually to the student who has shown outstanding achievement and aptitude in science through the first three years of high school. The award is given by the University of Rochester in New York.

Mielke is the daughter of Rick and Deborah Mielke of Preyer-Fiske Way, Monterey. In addition to this award, she has received the Colby College Book Award, the Wendy Heisman Scholar Athlete Award, and the Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizen Award.

Mielke is secretary of the National Honor Society and a member of Rotary Interact. An athlete, she plays volleyball and is co-captain of the girls' basketball team. She plans to attend college to study marine biology.

ॐ

The Thread of the Story

A Hint of Lace

The illustration this time shows part of a lace collar. Yes, a lace collar. It's as if the phrase itself is plucked right out of some other century.

Lace. It's a girl thing. Right? Well, maybe, at least through most of the twentieth century in North America. But take a look at illustrations of historical European men's clothing—and, yes, historical illustrations of early American men's clothing. It wasn't always a choice between IBM suits and logger's plaid and Levis, with moccasins made of deerhide. There were times when men's high fashion demanded cascades of lace.

Last time I wore this collar, it was Easter. Easter 2003. Don't know any of its earlier history, but at least I have this contemporary memory. I was right here in town. I'd missed the sunrise service at Gould Farm, and the Easter breakfast in the church social room, but I wore lace to church. Somehow it went perfectly well with my brand new clothes and brand new Easter bonnet.

Where were you and what were you doing last time you wore some lace?

On your outdoor clothes, I mean.

Lace. Give it a try.

— Mary Kate Jordan

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The Poet and the Musician

When I hear your singing
to my words
a window opens

between two mountains
I float into the clouds
and you into my soul.

*

The Doe

A doe
nibbling on green shoots
of joy
searching for them
painfully
among the thorns
and bitter weeds

every time I see you
my soul feeds.

*

Late afternoon

Last bridge but one
what forces me across?

I linger mid-arch
and watch the playful waters go
with what a sense of loss!

— A. O. Howell

Birches

Beneath their wintry skins
the women of the birch grove
percolate with spring.
In their sap and bones

the women of the birch grove
have never obeyed the cold word December.
In their sap and bones,
Eden celebrates eternally. They

have never obeyed the word cold; December
percolates with spring.
Eden celebrates, eternally fey
beneath their wintry skin.

— Mary Kate Jordan

Grandpa

Grandpa,
Where are you?
No more ball or catch in the backyard.

Grandpa,
I can't see your smile,
Nor your happiness glowing,
Upon your face.

Grandpa,
I need you to teach me things
I need to know for the outside world.

Grandpa,
What's going on?
I've had enough of
This game.
Now can we go home and play?

— Samantha Backhaus
(In remembrance of Erwin A. Backhaus, who passed away on March 30, 2003)

Body Parts— To Keep My Balance

I read that the writer John Nichols used to carry a little medicine bundle around with him when he traveled far from home. He lived near Taos, New Mexico, and when he flew to other parts of the country or to foreign lands on lecture tours or film projects, he would check into his hotel, go to his un-homey room, and get out his medicine bundle to keep himself balanced and connected to home. This little package contained a bit of sagebrush, bits of bone, and special rocks and other mementos of the desert. He would set them up on his bureau the way some travelers get out their family photos.

With the country at war and dire uncertainties at home and around the world, I have been feeling lately like Nichols on a foreign tour, even though I am right in Monterey. I have been wishing I had a medicine bundle of my own, something to keep me grounded at a dangerous time. To my great good fortune, a neighbor brought me just the perfect thing the other day.

She called first, with a tale of her dog's having brought home a "body part." Of course I pricked up my ears at this and pretty soon she had passed it on to me, the cure for all my troubles. Though I have not been to any foreign lands, I have carried this medicine around with me, spreading its healing properties to other sufferers in my community. At this point I would like to share it with you readers—and you can probably be glad to get your dose in print. The original subject has become a little ripe.

This is the left hind foot of a big beaver. It is a little damp, carrying with it the molecules of whatever wetland it last walked or swam through, when it had a whole beaver at its helm. I don't really think my neighbor's dog killed the beaver. I think she would have shown some damage herself from such a meeting. One of our dogs once tackled a beaver and spent the next six weeks with her own hind leg trussed up in a solid-gold veterinary arrangement. It was she, not the beaver, who nearly lost her leg. Beavers have cutters in their mouths that can take down something much bigger than a dog.

The damp fur of this foot is soft gray-brown in color and it is short and tidy. It covers the top of the foot and each of the five long slim toes, which are part of a broad flipper, or webbed foot. The skin of this flipper, the connecting sail or paddle, is the same soft dark color as the fur and is crisscrossed with tiny lines top and bottom, like the skin of a person's hand. On the sole of the foot, the skin of the toes and the flipper are soft, whereas the pads and heel of the foot itself are toughened and textured. This is the walking part of the machine, heavy and muscular. When you see the tracks of a beaver, the hind foot shows all the way to the heel. Like the track of a bear's hind foot, or a skunk's, or mine.

On the upper surface of this foot, each toe ends in a nail—you would never describe these as claws. They are shapely, rounded, a color match to the skin and the fur but slightly whitish at the edges. They are more cupped than mine, a good design for moving forward through water with little resistance. They are strong and give support to the toe-pad under them.

The inner three toes have thick, rounded nails, and the outermost one has a smaller, slightly sharper one. But the

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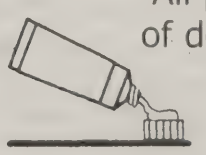

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showstopper here is the nail on the fourth toe, the ring finger of the foot. This nail is utterly unlike the other four and consists of two parts, a sort of scraper and an anvil. The top part, the scraper, is asymmetrical, curved to the outside, and has one very sharp edge. It lies close on top of the anvil, which is a hard horny piece that is slightly flexible and fits up into the scraper above it. Biologists, when they refer to this fourth toenail, describe it as a "split nail" for grooming. This description does not do justice to such a perfect tool.

I can flex the toe joints a little and the scraper and anvil open a bit. If I straighten the toe, they close up. This is the beaver's comb, and as small and odd as it may seem, it is critical to survival, and it has been for thousands of years. Those ancestral beavers were bigger than a black bear, and though our modern beavers never reach that size, they can weigh as much as sixty or seventy pounds, depending upon how long they live. Beavers are unusual in that they never stop growing.

However long a beaver lives, it spends most of its time in the water. It does not hibernate and it is warm-blooded, keeping its body temperature up despite the cold water it swims in, every day, all winter. One of the secrets to keeping warm is good grooming. As soon as the beaver comes out of the water, if it feels safe, it combs itself all over with its special toenails. It scrapes the water out of its long guard hairs, straightens them, and applies and distributes a thin coating of waterproofing from special oil glands. This careful job takes about half an hour.

Here on my desk I have the left hind foot of a beaver. The fur below the ankle is a bit longer than the rest and is even a little reddish-blond where it hangs down around the heel in a fringe. The long graceful toes are curled up the way they would be if the beaver were swimming, pulling its foot forward almost like a slim fist before thrusting back again in a strong sweep of power that spreads the flipper to a full five inches across and shoots the swimmer forward with maximum drive. The beaver does not do the flutter kick.

I am guessing this beaver was hit by a car out on Route 23. No amount of brilliant comb and paddle design can save you when your number comes up, no matter who you are. I hope when my time comes there will be some part of me worth taking home and showing off to friends (though I doubt it will be my feet or my comb). Meanwhile I am just grateful for the medicine bundle that was dropped in my lap recently when I was feeling sick.

— Bonner J. McAllester

How Is It Made?

Cultural Council Application Deadline May 10

The Monterey Cultural Council is seeking applications from local artists and artisans for a juried art event to be titled "How Is It Made?" The application deadline for the final round of jurying is May 10; the number of participants will be limited.

We envision a broad range of artistic representation, from fine arts to hand craftsmanship. With the idea of creating an educational opportunity for the community, the focus of the event will be on individual demonstrations of process and technique in addition to display and sales. Accepted artists will be expected to be prepared to discuss "**how** they do **what** they do" with the public in order to deepen everyone's appreciation for the skill, talent, and creative energy involved in producing the artwork.

The event will be held at the Monterey Firehouse Pavilion on Saturday, August 30, 2003, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. No entrance fee is required nor commissions on sales charged. For applications visit or call the Monterey Town Offices at 413-528-1443.

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Leslian Furcht

Tea Room Tales

A Fascination with Tea and Tea Rooms: The Eileen Lawlor Story

Not very long after I moved to Monterey, some seven years ago, I began to inquire about the large building in town, obviously empty, and oddly wedged between a big old house and the white church. All I had to do was ask and native Montereyans spoke easily of "snippets of time" they had spent in and around Tryon's Tea Room. Over the months my fascination (as well as my fantasies) grew ... about the space itself, the family members that ran it, and all of the other people whose personal stories might include a tea room tale or two. If I follow those hauntingly familiar words ... tea room, tea room ... I find myself tumbling backwards in time, through chapters of my own story.

Ah yes ... I'm in my Grandma's kitchen—a wondrous, warm and nurturing place to be—gazing up at the shelf where the row of miniature jelly glasses sit neatly. My beloved Grandma's "china closet" (as she calls this tall kitchen cupboard) has two large glass doors, rendering all of her dangling cups, piles of saucers, and odds and ends glassware *off limits* to the likes of me, age seven or eight, and my younger brother. With hands clutching the only reachable item, a metal drawer-pull, I call out definitively "the blue one, I want the blue tulip one!" And soon the blub-blub of fresh squeezed orange juice, encircled by those oh-so-familiar blue tulips, entices me to sit and eat my breakfast.

"This china closet was used in the Lawrenceville Tea Room, before they went out of business," Grandma says. "It's solid wood and very heavy. Your Pop-Pop had to pay two burly workmen to help him carry it home." There are, by now, so many faded layers of green and white paint on this important piece of history sitting in the kitchen that I can only stare awestruck. I immediately decide that a tea room must be a wonderful place!

Perhaps a tea room is like this china closet, somewhat orderly, mysteriously inviting, and trustworthy. There is, after all, great comfort in knowing that things are safe like those little jelly glasses stowed securely above my reach and that life is predictable—like orange juice in a jelly glass each morning; Coca-Cola each afternoon ...

"Oh, maybe the Lawrenceville Tea Room was like Daniel's Drug Store?" I wonder. After afternoon naps Grandma and I always rise, put on our hats, and walk proudly around the block to Daniel's for a fountain coke and nabs. Like a flock of birds lighting on a high wire, all of Mary Hicks Sewards' best friends descend simultaneously, on Daniel's Drug Store and they too order Coca-Cola and nabs. While they gossip and exaggerate and chatter about this or that, I am left free to wander between drug store cases, lulled by the melody and cadence of their voices. I am pretty sure by now that anything anyone could ever want (or need) can be found somewhere along these aisles. A tea room must be "just that kind of place."

Next I magically fast-forward and remember myself on a particularly damp and rainy afternoon in an English tea shop. Having been on our feet for several hours, my adopted English Quaker family and I settle, *with relief*, into the well-worn wooden chairs. As our large pot of Earl Grey tea sits steeping, I see my hostess matter-of-factly draw a plate of porcelain cups toward her. They are curiously rolled up into one another like a donut; with a simple authority Peggy MacGeoghegan unfurls the exact right number, and places each one in a saucer. She inquires, only with her eyes, Do you take tea with sugar cube, milk, or no? Then she confidently pours and passes the cup along. I am certain that this civilized and wholly deliberate English ritual has been enacted just for me. It creates a perfect mid-afternoon pause—a "window in time" for reflection upon oneself and the world—and a last chance to change a course of attitude or action before it's entirely too late, and day is done. I decide then and there that I will always try to drink an afternoon tea.

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More scenes quickly move through my mind's eye ... and as I open my village apartment door I encounter, for the first time, a fifth-floor neighbor (whom I have never seen), Miss Carlotta Tabor. At ninety she is moving erect but slowly, door to door, asking for signatures for a social cause she very much believes in.

Leslann Furcht

"those little jelly glasses ..."

So alive with concern is she, and so "charmed by her" am I, that I feel an instant rapport with this remarkable, genteel lady.

In the two years we have together as friends, before her peaceful death, Carlotta and I share our stories, our thoughts about life, and the various meaningful ways one might try to live it. I learn about practical spirituality and loving acceptance from her, and she learns what it's like to be a young woman, alone, in the big city, without parents or grandparents to guide and protect her.

In her youth Carlotta had been a wood-carver specializing in small garden animals and St. Francis statues. Over one very special pot of tea, she describes for me the forty summers she and another unmarried friend ran a roadside tea room, in the wilds of Maine. Every morning they baked fresh scones or English popovers for travelers who would, by chance, enter to refresh themselves en route to somewhere else. How many of these people's stories might include a fond memory or two of Carlotta's tea room, and the warm welcome they received there?

Carlotta has left me with some deliciously beautiful memories to draw on; a bone china teacup that was her grandmother's; and her woodcarving set (in case I ever decide to try my hand at it.)

And so it is, my newfound friends, I am fascinated to hear your stories, and interested to write them down. For you see, there are tea room tales we could all tell. Some might even include the Tryons—Della, Nina, Wallace—and the large building, obviously empty now, that sits in the center of Monterey.

— Eileen Lawlor

If you have a tea room tale and would be willing to be interviewed as part of this ongoing oral history project, please call Eileen at 528-7916.

Creative Writing Class May 4th

The youth and family programs of the Sandisfield Arts Center is presenting a free creative writing class for ages thirteen to ninety-nine, taught by playwright Richard Ploetz. The class will be on Sunday, May 4, at 2 p.m. at the Sandisfield Library/Community Center, Rt. 57, Sandisfield. This program is sponsored by the cultural councils of Sandisfield and Monterey. For information and to sign up, call Sue at 413-258-4953.

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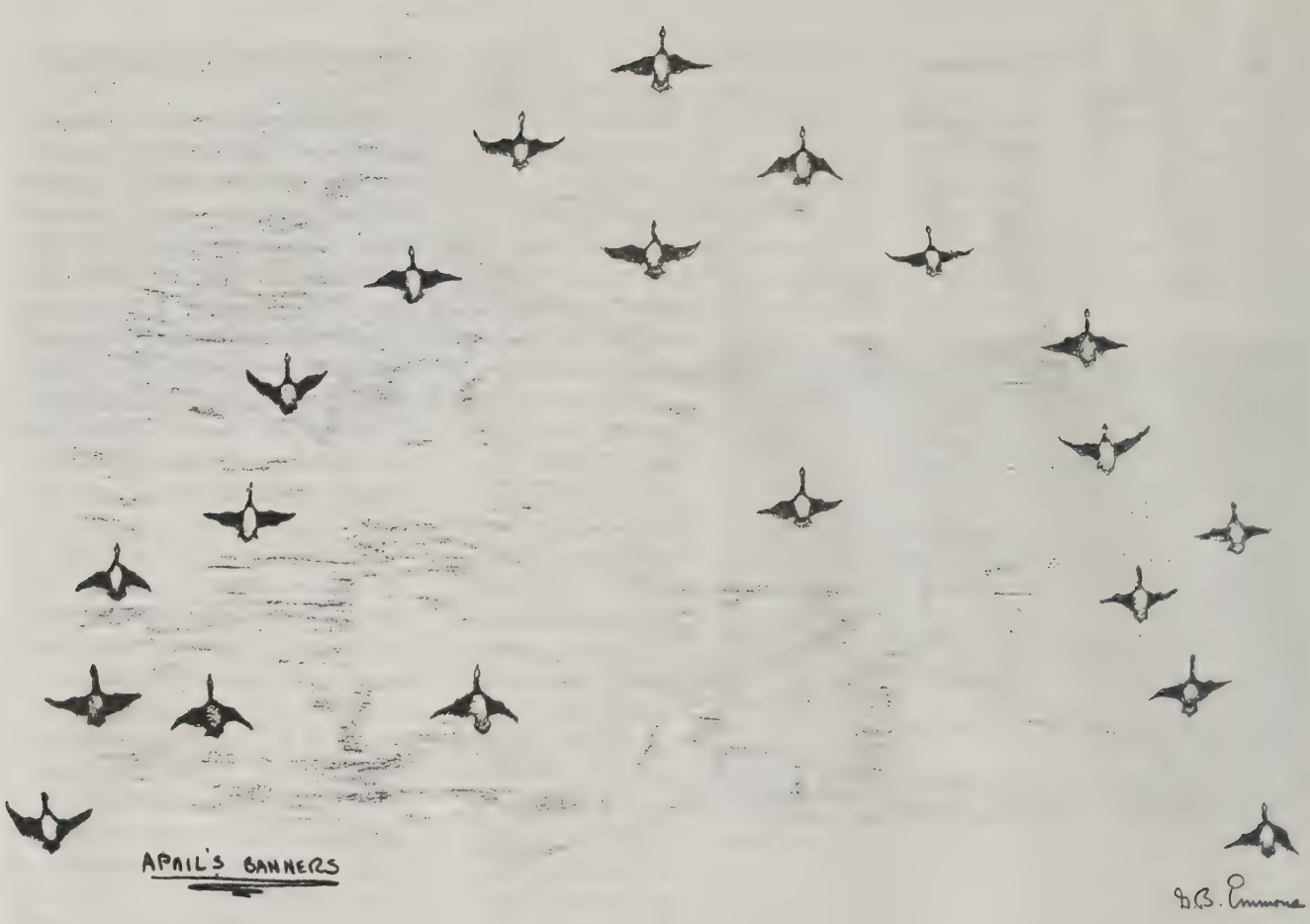

April Wildlife Report

Spring did not arrive with bird migrations on the wings of the vernal equinox as might be expected. At this station of the zodiac in the northern hemisphere, winter did not release its relentless grip around the icebound shores of Lake Garfield until early April, and then only grudgingly on the sunny side near the dam. Only then was the chilled stillness of the pale blue sky glorified by the musical clarion of Canada geese, which after a long, hard deep freeze, heralded a renewed life cycle in their annual choral from the heavens, like the thrilling notes of Handel's immortal *Messiah*.

The awakening of hibernating mammals, the spawning of fish in our streams and rivers, and the return of our indigenous song birds, like the swallows of Capistrano, are predictable activities that, although later than usual, give us a measure of progression of the coming season, as well as of increments of our lives. Here are some of the highlights of activity that have recently emerged before our very eyes!

Bad News Bears: The first report of a black bear at the bird feeders came on April 3, at the Hatchery Road residence of John and Marcia Doelman. They live in what might be described as a bear crossing and their feeders are hung by roped-through pulleys high in their trees. But a several-hundred-pound hungry boar (male) stood up high enough to reach seven or eight feet to jiggle the ropes and dump the seed to the ground. Bears were late in coming because they are not comfortable walking on snow, but as you read this if you have not put your feeders in for the night, it may already be too late!

Mountain Lions Gone South for the Winter: After a rash of Monterey mountain lion sightings last year, it seems that what might be called a mania of visual reports has moved into Connecticut, even though this camera-shy creature still has to be captured on film. On my car radio, talk station 1080 AM was abuzz in mid-April with reports of this

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large feline with a long tail in and around New Hartford as well as Litchfield. It may be that the snow was too deep for them here. The radio commentators I listened to with great interest were joking that the Fish and Wildlife official denial of the possibility of an indigenous lion population anywhere in these parts might best be described as a liongate cover-up.

A Fox behind Bars: My wife and I were awakened at dawn on April 10 by our giant schnauzer barking at a shrill wailing sound of a wild animal in distress somewhere across Bidwell Road near our neighbor Pam Sweeney's tennis court. I was told to get out of bed and investigate, and as I approached, I saw a large red fox running past the thick wire mesh fencing around the court. Inside was a kit no bigger in width than a tennis ball and separated from the vixen, justifiably and loudly so expressing its displeasure. When it saw me it was inspired to find an opening in the gate and run down the hill toward Lake Garfield after its mother. In the snow, I found foot prints of only two kits, which is unusual.

Snow Geese Signal Winter's Surrender: It was not until a full month after the first day of spring that Dale Duryea told me he had seen a small flock of snow geese standing in the field behind his log-cabin-style house looking at the last lingering ice flows of the season on the south (shady) side of Lake Garfield. Unlike their Canada cousins that drop into liberated open patches of water in echelons of V formations, sounding like the "Hallelujah Chorus," snow geese fly in bunched skeins of U formations with faster wing beats and a high-pitched nasal chorus. On their long journey to the arctic circle, Monterey is only a short stopover. Just as the arrival of Canadas heralds the beginning of the season, the departure of snow geese signals the end of the previous one. Taking wing, the white flags of surrender follow the receding frost line until it is finally out of sight and mind.

Waves talking to the shore
Their voices heard no more.

— George Emmons

ॐ

Notes from Greenhaven Farm

What's up?

This time of year many people would think, "not much," at least in terms of things to eat. The daffodils are up and blooming (welcome sight!) and the tulips are not far behind. But these lovelies are not to eat. Here at Greenhaven Farm, we have already dug and eaten the parsnips that overwintered in our garden, their starches turning to sugar in the frozen ground. Delicious!

There are good things to eat coming up out there now, however, and they are not in the garden but in our yard and the woods and hedgerows around the neighborhood. One of the best and most familiar of these wild edibles is the fiddlehead fern. What will one day in early June become a sea of graceful fronds waving in the breeze is now an apparent wasteland—a moonscape of dead brown branches flattened by winter snow, punctuated by dozens and dozens of homely brown humps. Large areas of our yard are ugly as can be in early spring after raking, and yet they contain hidden treasure.

Each brown hump is actually a cluster of three or more new ostrich fern stalks, each curled into a tight fist and covered by a papery brown substance. The stalk will grow and emerge first as a stem with the end in a tight curl—the fiddlehead—and later, after uncurling, it will be recognized as a fresh new fern leaf. By this time it will no longer be edible.

There are many types of ferns growing in the wild around here. The ostrich fern is the only edible one that I know of. You can tell them from all the others because they have a deep groove in the inside of the stem. They are easy to transplant. Many years ago we took several shovels-full of the brown base roots from here in Monterey and stuck them in shady spots around our home in Vermont.

I usually pick my fiddleheads when they are still tightly curled and close to the ground, though they are still edible until they are four to six inches tall. I pick off as much of the papery covering as I can outdoors where it can blow away, rather than bringing it inside where it will make a mess of the kitchen sink. Fiddleheads must be washed in two or even three changes of water to remove all of the gritty dirt clinging to them. Then they are ready to be steamed in a steamer basket until tender—about fifteen minutes. They are good served hot with butter, salt, and pepper. We like them cooled to room temperature after steaming and then marinated in Italian dressing for an hour or overnight.

Last year I brought marinated fiddleheads to the May community dinner, and they were a big hit. Perhaps I'll bring them again this year, and you can try them and see for yourself what a wonderful spring treat they are.

— Sally Pullen

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My Brush with History

December 16, 1965, Des Moines

It is just before Christmas vacation, and I should be feeling the relief and exaltation that comes after surviving my first semester in high school. Instead I am filled with apprehension. In my purse I carry a strip of black velvet I found in a long-forgotten doll-clothes box in my mother's sewing room. I have fashioned it into an armband to mourn the soldiers and civilians killed in Vietnam, and to support Senator Robert Kennedy's proposal to extend the Christmas ceasefire. My Unitarian Youth Group and some kids from the Quaker Meeting have joined with about sixty others to carry out this demonstration. I am passionate about the cause, but on this morning all I can think about is the threat from the School Board that anyone wearing an armband will be suspended. My parents, too, have forbidden me to participate. In my mother's words, "Your father has not decided yet how we feel about this war."

By the end of the day, only a handful of students wore the armbands, were expelled, and over the next few years became famous for successfully carrying their cause for free speech all the way to the Supreme Court. With my armband safely in my purse all day, I am not one of them.

October 1992, Great Barrington

My son is home from high school. I know because I can hear the door bang shut, and as is always the case at four o'clock on a day when there is no basketball practice, the entire energy of the house ratchets up a notch or two. "Mom," he yells as he takes two stairs at a time to find me at my desk. "We studied about a Supreme Court case in Social Studies today, and it was about your high school in Des Moines. Tinker vs. Des Moines Board of Education. Did you know those kids?"

"Yes, I did. They were friends of mine and I was at some of the planning meetings for the armband demonstration."

"Did you wear one?"

"No," I admit and wait for the question that I know will come, and it does, "Why not?"

I want to say, "I was so shy I never said a word at the protest meetings, and the other kids didn't even know my name. This was 1965 in Des Moines and Roosevelt High School still had one foot in the 1950s. It was before the Chicago Convention, Woodstock, Kent State, and the draft lottery that would affect every boy in my school was not to take place for another four years. Most kids were not aware of politics at all, and no one objected when the football coach made the boys chant 'Beat Viet Cong' while they did jumping jacks in gym class."

But I say none of these things. There is, after all, only one thing to say, and I say it: "I didn't have the courage."

"But you did protest the Vietnam War, didn't you?" he asks hopefully.

"Sure," I answer. "Lots of times." In my mind I add, "Safely, anonymously, in huge crowds."

He seems satisfied, and in a flash he descends the stairs, more than two at a time going down, and I soon hear the sound of basketball against blacktop and backboard coming from the driveway.

December, 2002, Monterey

It is Christmas and our home is full of houseguests. It is gift-opening time, and the room is already strewn with ribbon and wrapping paraphernalia, half-full champagne glasses, and nearly empty dessert trays and chocolate boxes.

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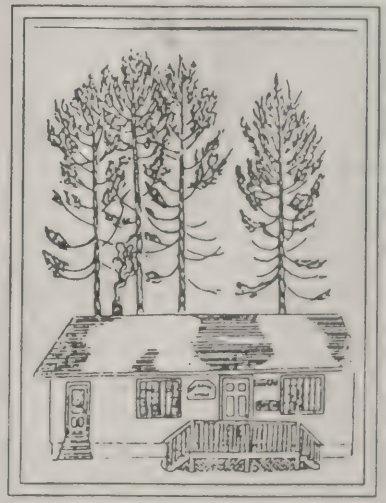

Keren, who has been my best friend since high school, presents me with her gift. It is a small book, *Tinker vs. Des Moines: Student Rights on Trial* by Doreen Rappaport. It appears to be a text for high school students, and throughout its pages there are slightly fuzzy black and white pictures of what life was like in high school in 1965, from the yearbook probably—prom queens, drama club, pep rallies. There are pictures of Vietnam too, black-booted soldiers standing with guns over Vietnamese lying dead on the ground, and one picture shows a longhaired young man burning a draft card. After all our guests are asleep I stay awake far into the night and read the whole book.

February 2003, Great Barrington

A friend of mine is going to New York City to protest the war in Iraq. At dinner last night she encourages me to come along, but I am noncommittal. "If you're not at the train at 7:00 a.m. I'll assume you aren't coming," she finally says, and I know I probably won't be there. It's not that I lack the courage this time. There's something else I know I have to do, and I realize that this is the day to do it.

On Saturday afternoons protestors in Great Barrington gather at the intersection of Main Street and State Road with signs for and against the war. For weeks now I have gone by contributing a honk or a wave. Today I decide to join them. I don't know anyone or belong to any local peace organizations, but I get friendly nods as I merge into the group on the left—a motley crew of old and young, all slightly familiar as small-town residents are—and someone hands me a pole that supports one half of a giant UN banner. But as motorists drive by and honk their support, I make eye contact with people I do know and they wave madly back in encouragement or give a peace sign.

I've been thinking about courage a lot lately. I think we define it by our families, our secret internal histories, our regrets and missed chances. But I also know that the word "courage" is not an appropriate frame of reference for me today. Courage demands acting in the face of fear, and compared to Roosevelt High School in 1965, Main Street is a cakewalk. Still, we never stop trying to prove ourselves to ourselves, and although it would be great to be in New York making history on a grand scale on this sunny cold afternoon, for me, today, I need to be here in my town where people know my name.

—Dianna Downing

P.O. Box 9, 01245

Here's to Monterey

To the Editor:

Forty years ago I discovered Monterey. We wanted a place to ski and vacation from New York. Loving the mountains and the lakes, we found what we wanted; a small town similar to the one where we live in New York.

We found a one-room cottage with the basics only, overlooking a lake. Over the years, mostly on weekends, we made it more habitable.

Our children grew up with the growth of the house and have enjoyed our time in Monterey.

Monterey is unique. The *Monterey News* is our source of information and a blessing to everyone—there is something for everyone.

The Monterey Day celebrations, the gala Lakefest, and the spectacular fireworks that all of a sudden come out of nowhere, lighting up the summer sky, are all in our memories.

Monterey is great. Please don't let the world around us change it.

Thank you Monterey.

— Eugene Bounous, Armonk, NY

HOW IS IT MADE?

Saturday, August 30, 2003
at the Monterey Fire House Pavilion

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

No entrance fee required
Number of participants limited

The ***Monterey Cultural Council*** *is seeking applications from local Artists and Artisans for a juried art event titled "HOW IS IT MADE?"*

The focus of the event will be on individual demonstrations of process and technique, with sales permitted.

APPLICATION DEADLINE FOR FIINAL ROUND OF JURYING MAY10, 2003

For applications call or stop by the Monterey Town Hall (413-528-1443)

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***

I will meet with you at your home in Monterey.

Contributors

We are grateful to the following readers for recent contributions to the *Monterey News* in response to our annual fund-raising appeal.

Janet & David Cathcart
Ian & Christa Lindsay
Barbara & Jules Dahlman
Kenneth & Gail Heath
Betsy Wood
Leonard & Marion Simon
Alice Howell
Sheila & Mathew Intner
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Calendar

Every Monday (except holidays): Select Board meeting, 8:30 a.m.–12 noon, Town Offices.

Saturday, May 3: Annual town meeting and town election, 9 a.m., Monterey Firehouse.

Sunday, May 4:

Monterey Cleanup Day. Call Sue Protheroe, 528-4450, for information.

Creative writing class by playwright Richard Ploetz, 2 p.m., Sandisfield Library/Community Center, Rt. 57, Sandisfield. For ages 13 and up. Free. This is being offered through the youth and family programs of the art center and is sponsored by local cultural councils (Sandisfield and Monterey). Call Sue at 258-4953 to sign up.

Wednesday, May 7:

Monterey Food Co-op order distribution and pickup, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Meetinghouse basement.

Thursday, May 8: Free blood pressure clinic, 2:30–3:30 p.m., Town Hall, administered by Visiting Nurses Assoc.

Sunday, May 11: Mother's Day

Wednesday, May 14: Community Dinner, 6 p.m., Meetinghouse Fellowship Hall. See p. 7.

Transfer Station Hours

Sunday ..... 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Wednesday .... 8 a.m.–1 p.m.
Saturday ..... 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

Free Childcare during Town Meeting

The Town of Monterey is pleased to provide free childcare during the annual town meeting on Saturday, May 3, 2003, from 9:15 a.m. until the end of the meeting. The Southern Berkshire YMCA will provide staff and quality care for children ages two and older on site, at the firehouse pavilion.

Please call SBYMCA at 528-YMCA (9622) if you have any questions and/or to preregister your child(ren).

Friday, May 16: Full Moon

Saturday, May 24: Square and contra dancing, 8:30–11:30 p.m., Sheffield Grange, Rt. 7, Sheffield. Music by Mountain Laurel, calling by Steve Howland. All dances are taught, beginners and children are welcome. Refreshments at intermission. Adults $6, children $3. For information call 528-9385.

Monday, May 26: Memorial Day: 11:00 a.m. Remembrance service for veterans and members of our armed forces will be held at the Veterans Memorial Park, corner of Blue Hill Road and Rte 23. 1:00 p.m. Annual Memorial Day Parade. The route will be from Sandisfield Road to the center of town at the post office and then proceed to the pavilion at the rear of the firehouse for free hot dogs, tonic and activities for all.

Saturday, June 7: Tolland Black Fly Day, a day of fun, games for children, flea markets, silent auctions, a road race, a grand parade, a disk jockey, and more entertainment.

The Observer
March 26–April 25

High temp. (4/16)	80°
Low temp. (4/1)	18°
Avg. high temp.	49.6°
Avg. low temp.	29.7°
Avg. temp.	39.7°
Total precipitation (rain and melted snow)	3.04"
Snowfall	7.5"

Precipitation occurred on 19 days.

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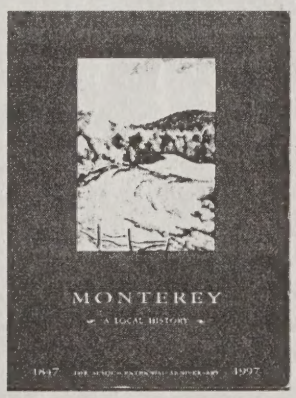

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..... George Emmons
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Our editorial address is *Monterey News*, P. O. Box 9, Monterey, MA, 01245. We invite signed letters, articles, drawings, poetry, and photographs from readers. Please send submissions (e-mail or computer disk if possible) by the 20th of the month before publication, addressed to the Editor. Send any change of address, or initial request to receive the *News* by mail (free) to Barbara Tryon, Business Manager. We will typeset a text-only ad for your Monterey-based business, service, or event, or advertisers may submit a computer formatted ad with graphics. Address request for advertising rates and further information to the Editor, or telephone us at 413-528-4347 or e-mail wilmarsh@localnet.com.

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MONTEREY, MA 01245

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Contributions from local artists this month:
Pat Arnow, pp. 4, 21;Maureen Banner, p. 20;
George Emmons, p. 18; Bonner McAllester, p. 14;
Glynis Oliver, pp. 2, 5, 8, 9, 11, 19.

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